

High Speed Rail Industry Leaders – “Why Britain needs HS2”

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Our latest report “Why Britain Needs HS2” is part of a submission to the upcoming Comprehensive Spending Review. The report shows that completing HS2 is essential for smashing the UK’s north-south divide, and outlines how the project will deliver improved rail services to far more towns and cities than is generally realised.

The report sets out a number of key findings that all point towards one inescapable conclusion: that HS2 must be delivered in full. Without completing HS2, the north-south divide will remain and worsen.

The key findings include:

- HS2 will smash the north-south divide by bringing Britain's towns and cities closer together and reducing the 40% productivity gap between London and the north
- City strategies and investments are predicated on HS2 – cancelling HS2 would leave those plans in cities like Birmingham and Leeds in jeopardy
- Dozens more towns benefit than may be realised – some 47 towns and cities are either on HS2 line-of-route or will get better rail services using capacity released on the existing network
- Pitting HS2 against Northern Powerhouse Rail is a false choice – HS2 itself delivers a key part of the NPR ambition; choosing between them would be akin to choosing between the M1 and M62
- The costs are affordable and good value – at just 0.4% of public spending and a comparable cost to the fuel duty freeze
- HS2 is essential to achieving net zero emissions and tackling the climate emergency – a two hour high speed rail journey results in 90% reduction in CO2 emissions compared flying the same route, even with today's electrical power generation mix. When electrical power generation is fully decarbonised, this will be 100%.
- HS2 is crucial to tackling the capacity crunch on our north-south railways – every time it is assessed, HS2 comes out as the most effective and affordable way to do so
- Cutting HS2 would cost thousands of jobs – 9000 people work on the project already, with tens of thousands more set to do so.

Among these key findings are that by freeing up capacity on existing railway lines, at least 22 towns and cities will benefit from better rail services, in addition to the 25 places on HS2's line of route.

In addition to the towns and cities that will benefit from a new HS2 service, the following places are set to benefit from better services on existing lines using capacity released by HS2: Watford, Milton Keynes, Coventry, Wakefield, Rugby, Nuneaton, Tamworth, Lichfield, Doncaster, Retford, Newark, Peterborough, Stevenage, Shrewsbury, Telford, Wrexham, Blackpool, Middlesbrough, Hull, Wolverhampton, Grantham, and Cambridge.

The following towns and cities will benefit from direct rail connections to HS2 hub stations: Slough, Maidenhead, Heathrow, Barnsley, Bangor, Llandudno, Holyhead, Bradford, Harrogate, Skipton, Scarborough, Rochdale, Bolton, Huddersfield, Runcorn, Blackburn, Burnley, Accrington, Barrow, Workington, Whitehaven, Dumfries, and Sunderland.

In Yorkshire, Bradford, Wakefield, Doncaster, and Hull will be able to get better services on existing lines using capacity released by HS2, in addition to the direct HS2 services that will go to York, Leeds and Sheffield.

Across the Midlands, : Coventry, Rugby, Nuneaton, Tamworth, Lichfield, Retford, Newark, Shrewsbury, Telford, Wolverhampton, and Grantham will each get better services on existing lines using capacity released by HS2 in addition to the direct HS2 services that will go to Birmingham, Toton (where new direct rail links from Kirkby and Mansfield can be provided), Chesterfield, Stafford, and Stoke-on-Trent. And services over the new HS2 line are also now expected to be provided for Nottingham, Leicester, Loughborough and Market Harborough.

On the issue of costs, the report finds that the project will only amount to 0.4% of public spending, and that the costs are comparable to the £50bn+ that the fuel duty freeze has cost the public purse since 2010.

The full report can be read here: [WHY BRITAIN NEEDS HS2](#)